

THOMAS E. WATSON, )  
)  
Plaintiff, )  
)  
v. ) No. 4:10CV722 DJS  
)  
SOUTHEAST MISSOURI )  
MENTAL HEALTH CENTER, )  
)  
Defendant. )

This matter is before the Court upon the motion of plaintiff, a resident at Southeast Missouri Mental Health Center, for leave to commence this action without prepayment of the filing fee pursuant to 28 U.S.C. § 1915. Upon consideration of the financial information provided with the motion, the Court finds that plaintiff is financially unable to pay any portion of the filing fee. As a result, plaintiff will be granted leave to proceed in forma pauperis pursuant to 28 U.S.C. § 1915. Additionally, the Court has reviewed the complaint and will dismiss it pursuant to 28 U.S.C. § 1915(e)(2)(B).

Pursuant to 28 U.S.C. § 1915(e)(2)(B), the Court must dismiss a complaint filed in forma pauperis if the action is frivolous, malicious, fails to state a claim upon which

relief can be granted, or seeks monetary relief from a defendant who is immune from such relief. An action is frivolous if it “lacks an arguable basis in either law or fact.” Neitzke v. Williams, 490 U.S. 319, 328 (1989). An action is malicious if it is undertaken for the purpose of harassing the named defendants and not for the purpose of vindicating a cognizable right. Spencer v. Rhodes, 656 F. Supp. 458, 461-63 (E.D.N.C. 1987), aff’d 826 F.2d 1059 (4th Cir. 1987).

To determine whether an action fails to state a claim upon which relief can be granted, the Court must engage in a two-step inquiry. First, the Court must identify the allegations in the complaint that are not entitled to the assumption of truth. Ashcroft v. Iqbal, 129 S. Ct. 1937, 1950-51 (2009). These include “legal conclusions” and “[t]hreadbare recitals of the elements of a cause of action [that are] supported by mere conclusory statements.” Id. at 1949. Second, the Court must determine whether the complaint states a plausible claim for relief. Id. at 1950-51. This is a “context-specific task that requires the reviewing court to draw on its judicial experience and common sense.” Id. at 1950. The plaintiff is required to plead facts that show more than the “mere possibility of misconduct.” Id. The Court must review the factual allegations in the complaint “to determine if they plausibly suggest an entitlement to relief.” Id. at 1951. When faced with alternative explanations for the alleged misconduct, the Court may exercise its judgment in determining whether plaintiff’s conclusion is the

most plausible or whether it is more likely that no misconduct occurred. Id. at 1950, 51-52.

### **The Complaint**

Plaintiff brings this action pursuant to 42 U.S.C. § 1983 seeking monetary damages from the Southeast Missouri Mental Health Center. Plaintiff asserts that a painting he made at the Mental Health Center was stolen from him. Plaintiff seeks “reimbursement” of the painting, according to what he believes the painting to be worth.

There is no cause of action under 42 U.S.C. § 1983 for unconstitutional taking of personal property where the state provides an adequate postdeprivation remedy. E.g., Clark v. Kansas City Missouri School Dist., 375 F.3d 698, 703 (8th Cir. 2004). Missouri provides the postdeprivation remedy of replevin for recovery of personal property. Id.; Mo. R. Civ. P. 99.01 - 99.15. As a result, plaintiff’s complaint shall be dismissed for failure to state a claim upon which relief can be granted.

Accordingly,

**IT IS HEREBY ORDERED** that plaintiff’s motion to proceed in forma pauperis [Doc. #2] is **GRANTED**.

**IT IS FURTHER ORDERED** that the Clerk shall not issue process or cause process to issue upon the complaint because the complaint is legally frivolous or fails to state a claim upon which relief can be granted, or both.

An appropriate Order of Dismissal shall accompany this Memorandum and Order.

Dated this 6th day of May, 2010.

/s/Donald J. Stohr  
UNITED STATES DISTRICT JUDGE